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Here Farini's narrative for the present ends. A fourth volume will bring down the story to the end of the siege, and the entry of the French into the city. But as the occurrences of this period, from the notoriety which they obtained at the time, are probably fresh in the recollection of all, we shall not follow his steps any farther. This third volume is hardly so well executed as its predecessors, and it betrays more frequently the influence of personal feeling and political prejudice. But as a whole, the work contains the most complete, impartial, and trustworthy account of the progress of events in the papal dominions during the late revolutionary period, which has as yet appeared in the English language.

- ART. VIII.—1. *The House of The Seven Gables; a Romance.* By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. Boston: Ticknor, Reed & Fields. 1851. 16mo. pp. 344.
2. *The Blithedale Romance.* By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. Boston: Ticknor, Reed & Fields. 1852. 16mo. pp. 288.

It is difficult to refer Hawthorne to any recognized class of writers. So far as our cognizance extends, he is the only individual of his class. In the popular sense of the word, he writes no poetry. We infer his incapacity of rhyme and metre, from his having adopted prose for his Carriers' Addresses, and other similar productions, which are usually cast in metrical forms. Nor yet is his language distinguished by euphony. It never flows spontaneously in numbers, as do so many of the descriptive and pathetic passages in Dickens's stories. On the other hand, it is often crisp and harsh, betraying little sensitiveness to musical accords and cadences; and we should despair of finding a paragraph of his, in which the sound could, by the most skilful reading, be made to enhance the impression of the sense. Yet more, we cannot remember a single poetical quotation in all his writings; and, though books are occasionally referred to, mention is never, or almost never, made of a poet or a poem. His own favorite reading does not, we therefore conclude, lie in this direction,

nor yet, as we apprehend, in any direction in which his fancy could borrow forms or colors, or could find nourishment homogeneous with its creations. Indeed, if we may judge from such hints as he furnishes of his own literary habits, the books with which he is chiefly familiar are the driest of chronicles, which furnish the raw material for many of his stories.

Yet with so much that must be alleged to the discredit of his poetical affinities, Hawthorne is preëminently a poet. It belongs to his genius not merely to narrate or describe, not merely to invent characters and incidents of the same constituent elements with those in history or in real life ; but to create out of nothing — to place before the imagination objects and personages which derive their verisimilitude not from their resemblance to the actual, but from their self-coherency. Plain story-telling, whether true or fictitious, is entirely beyond, or rather beneath, his capacity. He undertook, a few years ago, to write historical sketches of New England, in the Peter Parley style, for the behoof of children. He succeeded so admirably that people of mature and venerable age became children for the nonce, that they might read the legends of “Grandfather’s Chair ;” but it was not history ; it was the offspring of Hawthorne’s own brain, draped in Puritan costumes, and baptized with ancestral names. A year or two ago, he conceived the plan of reëditing some of the fables of the classic mythology ; but the result was a Pantheon all his own, rigidly true, indeed, to the letter of antiquity, and thus vindicating his title to genuine scholarship, while yet gods and heroes, Gorgons and Chimæræ, Atlas and Pegasus, all bore as close kindred to him as Minerva to Jupiter. In fine, his golden touch is as unfailing as was that of Midas, and transmutes whatever he lays hand upon. Even brutes, and homely household implements, and the motley livery of the pauper, yield to his alchemy, and are no longer coarse and sordid, yet without losing their place or their nature. In like manner, he so transforms incidents and transactions of the most trivial character, as to render them grand, pathetic, or grotesque. We may, perhaps, define more accurately this element of his power, by pressing still farther the metaphors

already employed. His golden touch, we would then say, imposes no superficial glitter, but brings out upon the surface, and concentrates in luminous points, the interior gilding, which is attached to the meanest objects and the lowliest scenes by their contact with the realm of sentiment, emotion, and spiritual life. He literally transforms, draws the hidden soul of whatever he describes to the light of day, and often veils exterior phenomena from clear view by the very tissue of motives, loves, antipathies, mental and moral idiosyncrasies, which they are wont to conceal. He thus, often, when least successful in the development of a plot, gives us portraiture of character as vivid as if they were wrought in flame-colors, and transcripts of inward experience so graphic that to read them is to live them over.

But with Hawthorne's close fidelity as a painter of man's interior nature and life, there is, after all, a subtle coloring and shading derived from no model, and so characteristic as to defy imitation. His heroes, while true in thought and speech to the parts which they are made to personate, always assume a tone of discourse or sentiment which we can imagine in him and in no other, under the supposed circumstances. His stories are, in fact, like Miss Kemble's dramatic readings, in which something of the same personality must betray itself in Caliban and Juliet, in Falstaff and Hamlet, in Coriolanus and King Lear. It is this which gives a prominent, and perhaps the chief, charm of his writings. They are, in the truest sense of the word, autobiographical; and, with repeated opportunities for cultivating his acquaintance by direct intercourse, we have learned from his books immeasurably more of his mental history, tastes, tendencies, sympathies, and opinions, than we should have known had we enjoyed his daily converse for a lifetime. Diffident and reserved as to the habits of the outer man, yet singularly communicative and social in disposition and desire, he takes his public for his confidant, and betrays to thousands of eyes likes and dislikes, whims and reveries, veins of mirthful and of serious reflection, moods of feeling both healthful and morbid, which it would be beyond his power to disclose through the ear, even to the most intimate of friends or the dearest of kindred.

As a writer of stories, whether in the form of tales, novels, or romances, Hawthorne will not bear comparison with his contemporaries in the same department, or measurement by any conventional rule. The most paltry tale-maker for magazines or newspapers can easily excel him in what we might term the mechanical portion of his art. His plots are seldom well devised or skilfully developed. They are either too simple to excite curiosity and attract interest, or too much involved for him to clear them up to the reader's satisfaction. His conversations, too, are not such as seem natural, in the sense of being probable or possible, but natural only because they are more rigidly true to fact and feeling than speech ever is. There is also, not infrequently, an incompleteness in his choicest productions, not as if he had been careless or hurried in their execution, but as if they had been too intimately a portion of his own being for separate existence,—as if they had been too deeply rooted in their native soil to bear transplanting. But, if he lacks skill in the management of his plot, he is independent of it. Were he to eliminate every thing of a narrative character from the best of his stories, we doubt whether their currency or his reputation would suffer detriment. Indeed, he is often most successful, where he does not even attempt narration, but selects some single scene, object, or incident, as the nucleus for a cluster of fancies and musings, melancholy, grave, humorous, or gay, either by itself, each in turn, or all blending and mutually interpreting, as in actual life, in which grief has its comic, and laughter its tragic, side. Thus, of his earlier series, none impress us as more truly worthy of his genius than "The Sister Years," a sketch of the midnight interview of the worn and jaded Old Year with her blooming and sanguine successor, the New Year; "Snow Flakes," a mere series of winter fireside fantasies; and "Night Sketches beneath an Umbrella," a description of what might be seen by any eye that looked beneath the surface on a short walk in Salem on a rainy evening.

Hawthorne has written nothing more likely to survive his times than several simply, yet gorgeously, wrought and highly suggestive allegories, among which "The Celestial Railroad"

holds the first place, and deserves an immortality coeval with that of the great prose-epic which furnished its theme. He represents the railroad as built, in conformity with the spirit of the times, on a route intersecting at intervals the path of Bunyan's Pilgrim, which it is designed to supersede. The old enemies of the foot-travellers have been bought over by offices on the new road, and Apollyon is engineer. Onward the cars rattle over the Slough of Despond, on a shaky causeway built of books of German rationalism and Transcendental divinity. They pass unchallenged within sight of the wicket-gate. The easy-cushioned passengers can hardly find gibes pungent enough for two determined pilgrims, whom they see trudging over the now grass-grown path, and Apollyon helps the sport by squirting steam at them. At Vanity-Fair is the chief station-house, at which they make a protracted pause for refreshment and amusement. Then, when they have satiated themselves with its gayeties, they hurry through the residue of the way, though with a dim sense of insecurity, and beset by sights and sounds of the direst omen. Arrived at the terminus, they find the black River of Death rolling angrily at their feet. No means of crossing have been provided by the projectors of the new road, or are vouchsafed to its passengers by the lord of the old way. And, as they despair of breasting the current unguided and unaided, and see its depths yawning for their utter perdition, they lift their eyes, and the despised pilgrims, who had not been ashamed of the ancient Christ-marked path, have already crossed the River, angels are leading them up the shining banks, up the crystal hills, the golden gates are opened for them, and the harps of heaven ring their welcome.

After this manner, Hawthorne's stories are generally written to illustrate some idea or sentiment, to which, and not to the personages or incidents, the author manifestly solicits his reader's heed. He is a philosopher, with a strong dash of the humorist in his composition; human life and society constitute his field of speculation; and his queries and conclusions tend, through his poetic instincts, to concrete rather than abstract forms. With him, a tale takes the place of an apophthegm; an allegory, of a homily; a romance, of an ethical treatise.

He seems incapable, not from penury, but from wealth of mind, of presenting a naked thought. The outward passage of every creation of his intellect lies through the inexhaustible vestry of an imagination swarming with textures and tints strange, fantastic, sometimes sombre, sometimes radiant, always beautiful. There is thus in his writings a philosophical completeness and unity, even when, in an artistical point of view, (as is often the case,) they are fragmentary or desultory. But, while a single thought gives its pervading hue and tone to a story or a volume, and that thought is always a brilliant of faultless lustre, he abounds in lesser gems of kindred perfectness. We know of no living or recent writer, from whom it would be possible to select so many sentences that might stand alone, as conveying ideas clearly defined and vividly expressed by imagery which at once astonishes by its novelty, charms by its aptness, and dazzles by its beauty. And there are numerous single metaphors of his comprised in a word or two, that, once read, recur perpetually to the memory, and supplant ever after their more literal, yet immeasurably less significant, synonyms.

The early history of New England, more largely than any other source, has supplied Hawthorne with names, events, and incidents, for his creations. The manners, customs, beliefs, superstitions of the Puritans, and their immediate descendants, seem to have taken the strongest hold upon his fancy. Their times are his heroic age, and he has made it mythological. As illustrative of history, his stories are eminently untrustworthy; for, where he runs parallel with recorded fact in his narrative of events, the spirit that animates and pervades them is of his own creation. Thus, in the "Scarlet Letter," he has at once depicted the exterior of early New England life with a fidelity that might shame the most accurate chronicler, and defaced it by passions too fierce and wild to have been stimulated to their desolating energy under colder skies than of Spain or Italy. At the same time, he has unwittingly defamed the fathers of New England, by locating his pictures of gross impurity and sacrilegious vice where no shadow of reproach, and no breath but of immaculate fame, had ever rested before. He thus has violated one

of the most sacred canons of literary creation. A writer, who borrows nothing from history, may allow himself an unlimited range in the painting of character; but he who selects a well-known place and epoch for his fiction, is bound to adjust his fiction to the analogy of fact, and especially to refrain from outraging the memory of the dead for the entertainment of the living.

Of our author's "Romances," (for he affects that title, and we could suggest no better,) we suppose that "The House of the Seven Gables" has been, and we think that it deserves to be, the most successful with the public. The sentiment to which it gives expression is, (in his own words,) "that the wrong-doing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and, divesting itself of every temporary advantage, becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief;" and he speaks, in the same sentence, "of the folly of tumbling down an avalanche of ill-gotten gold, or real estate, on the heads of an unfortunate posterity, thereby to maim and crush them, until the accumulated mass shall be scattered abroad in its original atoms."

"The House of the Seven Gables" was built, two centuries ago, by Colonel Pyncheon, a Puritan of more show of devotion Godward than of substantial justice manward. It was erected on a spot, the proprietorship of which had long been in dispute between himself and his poor neighbor, Matthew Maule, whose execution for witchcraft, not without the covert agency of his powerful antagonist, had alone settled the claim in favor of the latter. Maule, in dying, points at his enemy, and says, "God will give him blood to drink." On the very day when the stately mansion was to be dedicated by prayer and psalm, and by feast and wassail, while the assembled guests are waiting for the proprietor to bid them welcome, he is found dead in his library, his ruff and hoary beard saturated with blood.

It is the recent posterity of this founder of the Pyncheon family that constitute the leading personages of the romance. The old house, with its worm-eaten furniture and its decayed gentility, is occupied by Hepzibah, better known as Old Maid Pyncheon, who retains little of the family heritage

except pride of ancestry, and is constrained, by stress of poverty, to open one of those little shops, of which, quarter of a century ago, there were many scores, served by widows or lone women, in the towns and villages of New England. With tender pathos, streaked and veined by the richest humor, the conflict of pride and penury in the outset of this enterprise, and the mortification, disgust, and weariness of the first day's shopkeeping are described. At the close of the day, Phœbe, a country cousin, arrives on a visit to her kinswoman, and is at once established, as a "domesticated sunbeam," in the dust and gloom of the dilapidated dwelling. Under her auspices, neatness, order, thrift, and beauty gradually repair the waste and ruin of the past, and there are forthputtings of fresh and happy life under the very ribs of death. A young daguerreotypist, whom Hepzibah's necessity, not her will, has haughtily tolerated as her lodger, is Phœbe's ally in the work of renovation, and, through their joint ministry, some few rays of kindly comfort straggle into the desolate heart of the ancient maiden.

But Hepzibah bears a deeper grief than penury. One of the Pyncheons, then the heir and occupant of the estate, died many years previously, in as sudden and mysterious a manner as his ancestor, and with similar marks of blood about his person. Her brother, a youth of delicate nurture, was accused and convicted as his murderer; but, on account of some lingering doubt as to his guilt, his punishment had been commuted into perpetual imprisonment. His image has never faded from his sister's love. Then, too, she is annoyed by the supercilious patronage of her kinsman, Judge Pyncheon, the legitimate inheritor of the pompous respectability, purse-proud self-satisfaction, and apoplectic frame of their common ancestor. What can be more graphic, as the portrait of a sleek and well-fed worldling of the last generation, than the following?

"Towards noon, Hepzibah saw an elderly gentleman, large and portly, and of remarkably dignified demeanor, passing slowly along on the opposite side of the white and dusty street. On coming within the shadow of the Pyncheon-elm, he stopt, and (taking off his hat, meanwhile, to wipe the perspiration from his brow) seemed to scrutinize,

with especial interest, the dilapidated and rusty-visaged House of the Seven Gables. He himself, in a very different style, was as well worth looking at as the house. No better model need be sought, nor could have been found, of a very high order of respectability, which, by some indescribable magic, not merely expressed itself in his looks and gestures, but even governed the fashion of his garments, and rendered them all proper and essential to the man. Without appearing to differ, in any tangible way, from other people's clothes, there was yet a wide and rich gravity about them, that must have been a characteristic of the wearer, since it could not be defined as pertaining either to the cut or material. His gold-headed cane, too, — a serviceable staff, of dark, polished wood, — had similar traits, and had it chosen to take a walk by itself, would have been recognized anywhere as a tolerably adequate representative of its master. This character — which showed itself so strikingly in every thing about him, and the effect of which we seek to convey to the reader — went no deeper than his station, habits of life, and external circumstances. One perceived him to be a personage of mark, influence, and authority; and, especially, you could feel just as certain that he was opulent as if he had exhibited his bank account, or as if you had seen him touching the twigs of the Pyncheon-elm, and, Midas-like, transmuting them to gold.

"In his youth, he had probably been considered a handsome man; at his present age, his brow was too heavy, his temples too bare, his remaining hair too gray, his eye too cold, his lips too closely compressed, to bear any relation to mere personal beauty. He would have made a good and massive portrait; better now, perhaps, than at any previous period of his life, although his look might grow positively harsh, in the process of being fixed upon the canvas. The artist would have found it desirable to study his face, and prove its capacity for varied expression; to darken it with a frown, — to kindle it up with a smile.

"While the elderly gentleman stood looking at the Pyncheon-house, both the frown and the smile passed successively over his countenance. His eye rested on the shop-window, and, putting up a pair of gold-bowed spectacles, which he held in his hand, he minutely surveyed Hepzibah's little arrangement of toys and commodities. At first it seemed not to please him, — nay, to cause him exceeding displeasure, — and yet, the very next moment, he smiled. While the latter expression was yet on his lips, he caught a glimpse of Hepzibah, who had involuntarily bent forward to the window; and then the smile changed from acrid and disagreeable to the sunniest complacency and benevolence. He bowed, with a happy mixture of dignity and courteous kindliness, and pursued his way." pp. 64, 65.

The leading *dramatis personæ* have all been named, and the story may be told in brief. Hepzibah's brother is pardoned and sent back to her, dwarfed in intellect, enfeebled in body, dependent as a child of tender years, and the sole study of her life now is to soothe his petulance, to gratify his morbid tastes and appetites, and to woo back the intellect that has been prison-bound so long. Judge Pyncheon persists in seeking an interview with him, and dies, by the sudden visitation of God, in the very room and chair, and in the precise manner, in which the earlier heads of the family had been summoned to their account. The brother is cleared from the suspicion, which strong circumstantial evidence might well have cast upon him, of being his kinsman's murderer. It subsequently appears that the Judge had been the means, (as Hepzibah had never been unaware,) of arranging the evidence, which wrongfully consigned the brother to an almost lifelong incarceration, and had, through machinations of a like character, obtained possession of the great bulk of the family estate. The news of the death of the Judge's only son supervenes almost immediately upon his own death; and the occupants of the old house are the legal heirs of the childless intestate. Phœbe, a Pyncheon only in name, but inheriting from her mother a life unshadowed by the gloomy state and the respectable iniquity of her paternal ancestry, marries the daguerreotypist, who turns out to be the rightful representative of old Matthew Maule. The curse expires in their union; the prisoner, on whose deadened faculties the shadow of the Judge had lain as an incubus, draws a new lease of life from his kinsman's death; and he and his sister quit the old house for the judge's country-seat, under the kind tutelage of Phœbe and her bridegroom.

The successive scenes of this bold and startling fiction are portrayed with a vividness and power unsurpassed, and rarely equalled. The terrible Nemesis that waits on the extortion of the ancestor, and pursues the wages of his iniquity till the injured family receives its own again, reminds one of the inexorable fate of the Greek tragedy; and, in describing the successive footfalls of the angel of retribution in that ill-starred mansion, the author rises into a fearful sub-

limity worthy of the theme. In other portions, the narrative is sprightly, quaint, and droll, the dialogues seldom otherwise than natural and well managed, (though the daguerreotypist talks more than anybody but Phœbe could care to hear,) and the *denouement* free, for the most part, from abruptness and improbability. To many readers, the book has an additional charm, from its truth in numberless minutiae to life, speech, manners, and appearances, as they were in and about Salem thirty years ago. We should have recognized the locality under any disguise whatever of names or pretexts. Hepzibah, the ancient house, the peculiar fitting up of the shop, the customers young and old, Uncle Venner the wood-sawyer, nay, the outer man, (not the oleaginousness of conscience, we trust,) of Judge Pyncheon, and a hundred nameless objects and incidents, recall to our memory Salem, as we knew it, when, before the welding of place to place by railroads, there were local peculiarities.

The Blithedale Romance has its scene laid at Brook Farm, in Roxbury, at the time of its occupation by the well-known company of Socialists, of which Hawthorne was, for a little while, a member. He professes not to have selected his heroes from among his associates, nor to have so much as essayed an answer to any of the numerous questions that might be asked about the working of the institution; but simply has availed himself of its arrangements and environments, to give to the wholly fictitious figures a background never painted before. Yet, though his characters were not copied from actual life, they are in admirable keeping with the place and the miniature community. They are all abnormal; and where else should we be so likely to find an assemblage of abnormals as under the auspices of Socialistic reform? Indeed, in a country as prosperous as ours, with the comforts and prerogatives of home within reach of every man and woman not absolutely a pauper or a maniac, the Socialist might complain, with some color of reason, that the only materials for his experiments were insoluble precipitates from the crystallization of domestic life. Our author, therefore, might, without violation of poetic truth, give himself on this arena a wider range for his creations, than under the ordinary conditions of society.

The leading personage in the story is Hollingsworth, by profession formerly a blacksmith, now a philanthropist, but bringing the sledge-hammer mode of operation to bear upon the evils of society and their upholders,—a genuine Titan, without a spark of spiritual life to vitalize a ponderous frame, or to irradiate a no less massive intellect. Self-concentrated, absorbed in his dreams of social regeneration, yet intolerant of any line of march toward a brighter future in which he bears not the leader's truncheon, he loves man in the aggregate too fiercely to be kind, gentle, courteous, or even just, to men and women individually. The main design of the story is to depict the malign agency of such a spirit, in kindling into fierce antagonism, or stinging to madness, souls which it cannot wholly master; in crushing and absorbing minds of less power of resistance; and, finally, in turning its desolating energies upon its own happiness, and crowning its sacrificial pile by self-immolation. In the Blithedale family, he is brought into association with two women of widely dissimilar person and character, sisters by their father's side, but the one the child of his early and prosperous years, the nurseling and heiress of affluence,—the other the child of his penury and shame, by a second marriage with a poor seamstress. The elder daughter was separated from her father on the ruin of his fortune and fair fame. In some unaccountable way, whether as a renegade wife, or as an affianced but protesting bride, she has been under the control, and is still liable to the persecutions, of a professor of Mesmerism, Biology, and kindred humbugs, who had also enjoyed the services of her younger sister as a "medium," under the title of the "Veiled Lady." The elder is a queenly character, with as much of the man in her nature as is consistent with a feminine loveliness of person and intensity of passion,—of large intellectual resources, of brilliant social endowments, and resolutely bent on making conquest of other hearts without surrendering her own. She has arranged her sojourn at Blithedale as an episode, or rather as a series of interludes, in a career of gayety and splendor. Her sister, the secret of whose parentage, as well as the continued existence of their father, she learns only at a late period of the story, is sent by him because she is

there, and he, though he has not seen her from her infancy, regards her almost as an object of worship, and feels that, in her society, his fragile and timid child will be as under the wings of a guardian angel.

The elder of these sisters, who bears throughout the name adopted by herself as a contributor to magazines, Zenobia, determines on subduing Hollingsworth's pride of self-isolation, and on replacing his own image by hers as the object of his paramount devotion ; but succumbs in the effort to the very power on which she relies for his conquest, and grows enamored of him to the utmost capacity of her lofty, earnest, and impassioned being. Meanwhile, the heart-tendrils of the gentle Priscilla turn toward the strongest support within their reach, and, without her own consciousness, become indissolubly twined around the stalwart form and rough colossal nature of the Vulcanian philanthropist. Long unimpressed by either, then balanced between the two loves, he at length spurns Zenobia, who, too proud to survive rejection or to let mortal eye behold the traces of her agony, seeks refuge in suicide. He marries Priscilla ; but his own mental peace and energy are forever buried in Zenobia's grave, and she who had at first clung to his love in very feebleness and fear, is now the sole and the strong prop of his nerveless and broken spirit. So perfectly consonant with the "spiritual wickedness" of such a nature is the retribution awarded it, that we can hardly do our author justice without quoting an interview represented as occurring some years after the catastrophe. We should premise by saying that the story is told in the first person by Miles Coverdale, a member of the Blithedale household, who not till the closing sentence of the book confesses himself to have been an unavowed lover of Priscilla.

"But Hollingsworth! After 'all the evil that he did, are we to leave him thus, blest with the entire devotion of this one true heart, and with wealth at his disposal, to execute the long-contemplated project that had led him so far astray? What retribution is there here? My mind being vexed with precisely this query, I made a journey, some years since, for the sole purpose of catching a last glimpse at Hollingsworth, and judging for myself whether he were a happy man or no. I learned that he inhabited a small cottage, that

his way of life was exceedingly retired, and that my only chance of encountering him or Priscilla was to meet them in a secluded lane, where, in the latter part of the afternoon, they were accustomed to walk. I did meet them, accordingly. As they approached me, I observed in Hollingsworth's face a depressed and melancholy look, that seemed habitual;—the powerfully-built man showed a self-distrustful weakness, and a childlike or childish tendency to press close, and closer still, to the side of the slender woman whose arm was within his. In Priscilla's manner there was a protective and watchful quality, as if she felt herself the guardian of her companion; but, likewise, a deep, submissive, unquestioning reverence, and also a veiled happiness in her fair and quiet countenance.

"Drawing nearer, Priscilla recognized me, and gave me a kind and friendly smile, but with a slight gesture, which I could not help interpreting as an entreaty not to make myself known to Hollingsworth. Nevertheless, an impulse took possession of me, and compelled me to address him.

"‘I have come, Hollingsworth,’ said I, ‘to view your grand edifice for the reformation of criminals. Is it finished yet?’

"‘No, nor begun,’ answered he, without raising his eyes. ‘A very small one answers all my purposes.’

"Priscilla threw me an upbraiding glance. But I spoke again, with a bitter and revengeful emotion, as if flinging a poisoned arrow at Hollingsworth's heart.

"‘Up to this moment,’ I inquired, ‘how many criminals have you reformed?’

"‘Not one,’ said Hollingsworth, with his eyes still fixed on the ground. ‘Ever since we parted, I have been busy with a single murderer.’

"Then the tears gushed into my eyes, and I forgave him; for I remembered the wild energy, the passionate shriek, with which Zenobia had spoken those words,—‘Tell him he has murdered me! Tell him that I'll haunt him!’—and I knew what murderer he meant, and whose vindictive shadow dogged the side where Priscilla was not.

"The moral which presents itself to my reflections, as drawn from Hollingsworth's character and errors, is simply this,—that, admitting what is called philanthropy, when adopted as a profession, to be often useful by its energetic impulse to society at large, it is perilous to the individual whose ruling passion, in one exclusive channel, it thus becomes. It ruins, or is fearfully apt to ruin, the heart, the rich juices of which God never meant should be pressed violently out, and distilled into alcoholic liquor, by an unnatural process, but should render

life sweet, bland, and gently beneficent, and insensibly influence other hearts and other lives to the same blessed end. I see in Hollingsworth an exemplification of the most awful truth in Bunyan's book of such; — from the very gate of heaven there is a by-way to the pit!" pp. 281 – 283.

As a story, we are inclined to esteem this inferior to either of its predecessors in similar form. The Biological Professor is an ugly and repulsive excrescence; and, as his connection with the plot is but imperfectly explained, while at the same time his agency is wholly unnecessary in shaping the character or accounting for the conduct of the sisters, we believe that the romance would be greatly improved by expunging the chapters in which he makes his appearance. Then, too, the dialogues of the Blithedale optimists are often prolix, wearisome, and we should say unnatural, were it not for our ignorance of the way in which people thrown into the closest society, with no preëxisting bond of kindred or of sympathy, would be likely to talk. But whether from the life or not, a great deal of Arcadian material is wrought into the sayings and doings of this community, and it makes but an incongruous woof on the homespun warp of New England farm life. We feel also constrained to enter our protest against the gratuitous horrors of Zenobia's suicide. True, indeed, the nocturnal dragging of the river for her body, and the whole subsequent story of that night have few parallels for terrible lifelikeness in all modern fiction, and would hardly yield in the anti-climax of beauty to Matthew Lewis's or Maturin's most appalling prison and death-scenes; but here there is not the slightest need of a catastrophe so violent, or even a fitting preparation for it. The tone of her conversation, on the very eve of the event, indicates a mind too strong, too self-possessed, too rich in its own independent resources, to attach even poetic probability to the desperate act.

But with all these drawbacks, the Blithedale Romance is a work of no ordinary power, and indicative of all its author's mental affluence. In character-painting, he has overtaken his highest previous skill in Hollingsworth, and exceeded it in Zenobia. Then, of lesser personages, who could fail to recognize, in Silas Foster, the agricultural foreman of the farm, a

marvellously accurate type of the New England yeoman of the generation just now passing the meridian of manhood? The descriptions of the kitchen, the table, the style of dress, the manner of labor, and the Sunday habits of the Blithedale community, attractive as they are in themselves, are doubly so, as being beyond a question the portions in which observation and experience, rather than fancy, furnished the material for the narrative. The following is manifestly a passage of this sort; but we should hardly quote it in full, did it not embody so much of the obvious philosophy of socialism.

“In the interval of my seclusion, there had been a number of recruits to our little army of saints and martyrs. They were mostly individuals who had gone through such an experience as to disgust them with ordinary pursuits, but who were not yet so old, nor had suffered so deeply, as to lose their faith in the better time to come. On comparing their minds one with another, they often discovered that this idea of a Community had been growing up, in silent and unknown sympathy, for years. Thoughtful, strongly-lined faces were among them; sombre brows, but eyes that did not require spectacles, unless prematurely dimmed by the student’s lamplight, and hair that seldom showed a thread of silver. Age, wedded to the past, incrusting over with a stony layer of habits, and retaining nothing fluid in its possibilities, would have been absurdly out of place in an enterprise like this. Youth, too, in its early dawn, was hardly more adapted to our purpose; for it would behold the morning radiance of its own spirit beaming over the very same spots of withered grass and barren sand whence most of us had seen it vanish. We had very young people with us, it is true, — downy lads, rosy girls in their first teens, and children of all heights above one’s knee; — but these had chiefly been sent hither for education, which it was one of the objects and methods of our institution to supply. Then we had boarders, from town and elsewhere, who lived with us in a familiar way, sympathized more or less in our theories, and sometimes shared in our labors.

“On the whole, it was a society such as has seldom met together; nor, perhaps, could it reasonably be expected to hold together long. Persons of marked individuality — crooked sticks, as some of us might be called — are not exactly the easiest to bind up into a fagot. But, so long as our union should subsist, a man of intellect and feeling, with a free nature in him, might have sought far and near without finding so many points of attraction as would allure him hitherward. We were of all creeds and opinions, and generally tolerant of all, on every

imaginable subject. Our bond, it seems to me, was not affirmative, but negative. We had individually found one thing or another to quarrel with in our past life, and were pretty well agreed as to the inexpediency of lumbering along with the old system any further. As to what should be substituted, there was much less unanimity. We did not greatly care — at least, I never did — for the written constitution under which our millennium had commenced. My hope was, that, between theory and practice, a true and available mode of life might be struck out; and that, even should we ultimately fail, the months or years spent in the trial would not have been wasted, either as regarded passing enjoyment, or the experience which makes men wise.

“Arcadians though we were, our costume bore no resemblance to the beribboned doublets, silk breeches and stockings, and slippers fastened with artificial roses, that distinguish the pastoral people of poetry and the stage. In outward show, I humbly conceive, we looked rather like a gang of beggars, or banditti, than either a company of honest laboring men, or a conclave of philosophers. Whatever might be our points of difference, we all of us seemed to have come to Blithedale with the one thrifty and laudable idea of wearing out our old clothes. Such garments as had an airing, whenever we strode a-field! Coats with high collars and with no collars, broad-skirted or swallow-tailed, and with the waist at every point between the hip and arm-pit; pantaloons of a dozen successive epochs, and greatly defaced at the knees by the humiliations of the wearer before his lady-love; — in short, we were a living epitome of defunct fashions, and the very raggedest presentment of men who had seen better days. It was gentility in tatters. Often retaining a scholarlike or clerical air, you might have taken us for the denizens of Grub-street, intent on getting a comfortable livelihood by agricultural labor; or Coleridge’s projected Pantisocracy in full experiment; or Candide and his motley associates, at work in their cabbage-garden; or any thing else that was miserably out at elbows, and most clumsily patched in the rear. We might have been sworn comrades to Falstaff’s ragged regiment. Little skill as we boasted in other points of husbandry, every mother’s son of us would have served admirably to stick up for a scarecrow. And the worst of the matter was, that the first energetic movement essential to one downright stroke of real labor was sure to put a finish to these poor habiliments. So we gradually flung them all aside, and took to honest homespun and linsey-woolsey, as preferable, on the whole, to the plan recommended, I think, by Virgil, — ‘*Ara nudus, sere nudus*,’ — which, as Silas Foster remarked, when I translated the maxim, would be apt to astonish the women-folks.

"After a reasonable training, the yeoman life throve well with us. Our faces took the sunburn kindly; our chests gained in compass, and our shoulders in breadth and squareness; our great brown fists looked as if they had never been capable of kid gloves. The plough, the hoe, the scythe, and the hay-fork grew familiar to our grasp. The oxen responded to our voices. We could do almost as fair a day's work as Silas Foster himself, sleep dreamlessly after it, and awake at daybreak with only a little stiffness of the joints, which was usually quite gone by breakfast-time.

"To be sure, our next neighbors pretended to be incredulous as to our real proficiency in the business which we had taken in hand. They told slanderous fables about our inability to yoke our own oxen, or to drive them a-field when yoked, or to release the poor brutes from their conjugal bond at night-fall. They had the face to say, too, that the cows laughed at our awkwardness at milking-time, and invariably kicked over the pails; partly in consequence of our putting the stool on the wrong side, and partly because, taking offence at the whisking of their tails, we were in the habit of holding these natural fly-flappers with one hand, and milking with the other. They further averred that we hoed up whole acres of Indian corn and other crops, and drew the earth carefully about the weeds; and that we raised five hundred tufts of burdock, mistaking them for cabbages; and that, by dint of unskilful planting, few of our seeds ever came up at all, or, if they did come up, it was stern-foremost; and that we spent the better part of the month of June in reversing a field of beans, which had thrust themselves out of the ground in this unseemly way. They quoted it as nothing more than an ordinary occurrence for one or other of us to crop off two or three fingers, of a morning, by our clumsy use of the hay-cutter. Finally, and as an ultimate catastrophe, these mendacious rogues circulated a report that we communitarians were exterminated, to the last man, by severing ourselves asunder with the sweep of our own scythes! — and that the world had lost nothing by this little accident.

"But this was pure envy and malice on the part of the neighboring farmers. The peril of our new way of life was not lest we should fail in becoming practical agriculturists, but that we should probably cease to be any thing else. While our enterprise lay all in theory, we had pleased ourselves with delectable visions of the spiritualization of labor. It was to be our form of prayer and ceremonial of worship. Each stroke of the hoe was to uncover some aromatic root of wisdom, heretofore hidden from the sun. Pausing in the field, to let the wind exhale the moisture from our foreheads, we were to look upward, and

catch glimpses into the far-off soul of truth. In this point of view, matters did not turn out quite so well as we anticipated. It is very true that, sometimes, gazing casually around me, out of the midst of my toil, I used to discern a richer picturesqueness in the visible scene of earth and sky. There was, at such moments, a novelty, an unwonted aspect, on the face of Nature, as if she had been taken by surprise and seen at unawares, with no opportunity to put off her real look, and assume the mask with which she mysteriously hides herself from mortals. But this was all. The clods of earth, which we so constantly belabored and turned over and over, were never etherealized into thought. Our thoughts, on the contrary, were fast becoming cloddish. Our labor symbolized nothing, and left us mentally sluggish in the dusk of the evening. Intellectual activity is incompatible with any large amount of bodily exercise. The yeoman and the scholar—the yeoman and the man of finest moral culture, though not the man of sturdiest sense and integrity—are two distinct individuals, and can never be melted or welded into one substance.” pp. 74–80.

We have no disposition to enter at large on the subject opened by the foregoing extract, yet we may not unaptly crave a moment's heed for reflections which this book forces upon us. Blithedale has left upon our memory only associations of sadness and desolation, and that not alone on account of the tragedy consummated within its domain, but from the utter homelessness of its inmates. The shades wandering on the hither side of the Styx hardly offer a more dreary image to the fancy, than these inmates of the phalanstery on their holidays. We can, indeed, conceive of the relations and affections of life as subsisting in some sort independently of separate homes. The conjugal relation, though fearfully imperilled, might be kept sacred, and the parental tie, if loosened, not wholly dissolved, in the gregarious life which the socialist reformer would have us lead. It has also been pretty fairly demonstrated that there would be not only a more equal diffusion, but a more profuse creation, of the elements of material comfort and enjoyment, did men, women, and children herd together in organized groups, by fifties, hundreds, and thousands. But, after all, there is in human nature an irresistible tendency to the erection of a distinct abode for every household. There are chords of sentiment in every heart, which can respond only to the word HOME. There are profound and

almost universal wants which could be met, there are joys which could be experienced, under no other condition of things.

Domestic life bears a close analogy to the whole system of the universe. In the material creation, every object is at once a centre and a satellite. The sun has its own orbit of revolution, while lesser worlds describe their path around it. The planets, secondaries to the sun, are primaries to their moons. Every object, every particle of matter, itself drawn by mighty attractions, is itself a centre of attraction to surrounding objects or adjacent particles. In human society, almost all are in circumferences, moving around distant centres — with reference to the Supreme Being, all are so. But in his home, every human being is himself a centre, — the parent, of reverence; the child, of love; the dependent, of tender care. Here the little become great, and the obscure are clothed with honor. Those made to feel their insignificance in other relations, grow important here. Those whose outward life seems a blank, have here a life on which others hang with loving interest. Each is here looked upon with distinguishing regard, though elsewhere he may be counted as a unit rather than reckoned as an individual. Nor can we say what multitudes of our race would be given over to the consciousness of an utterly forsaken, neglected, barren, worthless existence, were there not in their homes something to make their life worth living, some dear appreciation on the part of others, some tender offices for them to find happiness in rendering. Never do we feel the blessedness of home more deeply than in looking at a promiscuous group of children. There may be many in the group, filthy, misshapen, ungainly, coarse, awkward; many in whom, individually, no possible self-discipline could awaken in us a spark of tender feeling, and who, in the multitudinous nursery by which socialism proposes to simplify and cheapen the process of juvenile training, would grow up like calves in the stall, nourished with sole reference to what work they might do when grown. But among them all, we may not find an unhappy face; the most squalid or uncouth have not any thing in look or manner that betrays them as objects of pity. For each of them has a

home, where he has a close and a dear place in a few hearts. On the patched garment of that ill-clad urchin, the mother has wrought lovingly, and appended to it some hoarded remnant of obsolete finery, and to her it is not unseemly. The boisterousness of that rude lad is deemed at home the exuberance of good humor and the ebullition of precocious wit; while that girl, who studies hard all day, yet is always at the foot of her class, in the eyes that love her is quiet and unambitious, but by no means stupid. The deformed boy has a little sister who thinks him beautiful, and his misfortune consecrates him to the assiduous offices and cheerful sacrifices of every member of the home circle.

But socialism pleads for its institutions in the name of the poor, and promises to banish pauperism and want from the civilized world whenever it gains supremacy. Yet the extirpation of penury would hardly be a social benefit, if with it were to be rooted up the sympathies and charities which result from the intermingling of the rich and poor. We do not believe that the Creator ever intended that human institutions and arrangements should produce worthy and valuable results independently of individual virtue. It is incident to our probation as moral agents, that the bands, wheels, and pulleys of the social machine should be constantly liable to be thrown out of gearing, without weights of our own addition, and compensations of our own devising,—without the unintermitted and earnest exercise of the best powers and the purest affections. It is a wakeful sense of justice, a religious love, an active humanity, that alone can distribute the gifts of God with equity. The only self-adjusting social system must be that of a thoroughly Christianized commonwealth. We look with entire complacency on large accumulations of property by individuals. They have their types in the most beneficent arrangements of nature. Water, without which no plant can grow and no creature live, is not distributed, on the socialistic plan, in equal tiny reservoirs, at brief intervals, but gathered into those deep channels and vast hollows which the Creator has scooped out for it from the solid ground. But as the sun broods over ocean, lake, and river, they yield their trust, to be borne by the winds of heaven, dropped in dew upon the

flower-cup, shed in gentle rain into the hillside spring, poured through the saturated earth into the cottage well; and then, when it has made the desert blossom, and refreshed all the tribes of animated nature, it flows back in paths which it clothes with verdure to the source whence it came. Thus, were the reservoirs of superfluous wealth only open to the rays of Christian benevolence, clouds of mercy would rise, and dews of charity fall, from them unceasingly, — the waste places of humanity would be glad, and there would be springs in the wilderness. The wealth would as now return to its source, and the reservoirs would be kept full; but its whole circuit would be marked by comfort, abundance, and gratitude.

For the very sake of the poor, would we preserve the sacredness and tighten the bonds of domestic life. Home is the laboratory of all generous affections. A voluntarily homeless being is, with the rarest exceptions, intensely selfish. Those who seek no near claims on their kind offices seldom have a heart for the more remote objects of charity. From a little loved or a distracted home, there go forth scanty alms, or none. The relations of domestic life, when enjoyed in their rightful intimacy and tenderness, create a genial good feeling, an overflowing kindness of spirit, which is sure to diffuse its own blessedness in an ever-widening circle. The substitution of barracks for homes, in arresting the fountains of domestic sympathy, would freeze the little rills of charity which now flow round from house to house, and from heart to heart, unite the rich and poor in mutual benefit, and blend the extremes of social life in sincere fellow-feeling, esteem, and love.